

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 DLOS-09 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 EPG-02 EB-07 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-01

INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

OES-07 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 PRS-01

PA-01 /129 W

-----071519Z 099106 /46

O 071415Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7029

INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

RUDKBTQAMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 4859

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR PRIORITY

EUCOM PRIORITY

COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES PRIORITY

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

CTF SIX SEVEN PRIORITY

CTF SIX NINE PRIORITY

CTG SWX ZERO PT TWO PRIORITY

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN PRIORITY

CTF SIX ZERO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 3988

CAIRO PASS SENATOR STONE

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CINCUSNAVEUR AND EUCOM FOR POLADS: USDOCOSOUTH PASS

CINCOSOUTH FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PLOS ENRG TS LY

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE

REF: TUNIS 3951

1. SUMMAYR: TUNISIAN MEDIA ON JUNE 7 ANNOUNCED THAT LIBYAN FONMIN TURAYKI ARRIVES IN TUNIS AT 7:00 P.M. JUNE 7 TO REOPEN TALKS WITH GOT, AND PSD POLITICAL BUREAU SUPPORTS BOURGUIBA'S EFFORTS OO REACH PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO DISPUTE.END SUMMARY.

2. TUNISIAN MEDIA ANNOUNCED MORNING OF JUNE 7 THAT ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL MAHMOUD RIADH IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN TUNIS DURING MORNING AND THAT LIBYAN FOREIGN MINISTER TURAYKI WILL ARRIVE AT 7:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME (1:00 P.M. WASHINGTON TIME). PAPERS ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT RIADH PLANS TO STAY IN TUNIS FOR TWO DAYS.

3. REFLECTING OFFICIAL GOT POSITION, ALL MEDIA EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT TALKS HAVE RES ED. GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED NEWSPAPER

"LA PRESSE" AND PARTY DAILY "L'ACTION" BOTH EDITORIALIZED ON HOPEFUL ASPECT OF RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS AND EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT "GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS, FRIENDSHIP AND PATH OF DIALOGUE" WILL RESULT IN RAPID SOLUTION TO DISPUTE ON BASIS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. "L'ACTION" FURTHER COMMENTED THAT QADHAFI'S JUNE 2 SPEECH SUPPORTING SOLUTION ON BASIS OF NEGOTIATION AND ARBITRATION, FOLLOWED BY PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA RESPONSE,NOW CREATES "FAVORABLE CLIMATE FOR HAPPY EVOLUTIO OF THE PROBLEM."

4. THE JUNE 6 PSD POLITICAL BUREAU MEETING CHAIRED BY PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA WAS GIVEN PROMINENT COVERAGE IN MEDIA. PRESS PUBLISHED CONFIDENTIAL

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ON JUNE 7 A COMMUNIQUE WHICH EXPRESSED POLITICAL BUREAU'S SATISFACTION AT "POSITIVE EVOLUTION IN RELATIONS" BETWEEN TWO STATES AND APPLAUDED PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO RESPOND TO LIBYAN INITIATIVES IN "RECIPROCAL DESIRE TO AVOID CONFRONTATION." POLITICAL BUREAU ALSO DECLARED THAT TUNISIA, WHILE CAREFUL TO PROTECT ITS LEGITIMATE RIGHTS AND TO SAFEGUARD ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS, REMAINS COMMITTED TO ACTING WISELY AND MATURELY AND TO AVOIDING ANY ACT THAT WOULD DAMAGE FRATERNAL RELATIONS BETWEEN LIBYAN AND TUNISIAN PEOPLES. FINALLY THE POLITICAL BUREAU RESTATED THAT THE DISPUTE CAN ONLY BE SETTLED THROUGH NEGOTIATION AND ARBITRATION ON THE BASIS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

5. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY NORMALLY RELIABLE SOURCE THAT EX-FOREIGN MINISTER MOHAMED MASMOUDI SENT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA A MESSAGE ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE. KMASMOUDI REPORTEDLY URGED TUNISIA TO ACT POSITIVELY ON PRESIDENT QADHAFI'S PROPOSAL TO "PUT THE CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE BEHIND US" AND TO BUILD "TUNISIAN-LIBYAN SOLIDARITY." MASMOUDI TOLD BOURGUIBA THAT QADHAFI WAS OFFERING TO PUT THE RESOURCES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES AT THEIR COMMON DISPOSAL AND

COUNSELED THAT TUNISIA SHOULD NOT LET THIS OPPORTUNITY GO BY. OUR SOURCE BELIEVES THAT THIS MESSAGE FROM MASMOUDI TO BOURGUIBA ARRIVED ON SATURDAY JUNE 4 AND THAT IT INFLUENCED THE PRESIDENT TO RE-EXAMINE QADHAFI'S JUNE 2 SPEECH, OPENING WAY FOR THE CURRENT RENEWAL OF TUNISIAN-LIBYAN TALKS.

6. WHILE EMBASSY HAS NO FIRM INFORMATION, WE CAN ONLY DRAW CONCLUSION THAT MAIN PURPOSE OF EXTRAORDINARY POLITICAL BUREAU MEETING UNDER BOURGUIBA'S CHAIRMANSHIP WAS TO REASSURE POLITICAL CRICLES AND TUNISIAN PEOPLE THAT PRESIDENT IS STILL VERY MUCH IN CHARGE AND THAT NATIONAL INTERESTS WILL BE PROTECTED. AS WE HAVE REPORTED EARLIER, THERE HAS BEEN SOME CONCERN EXPRESSED HERE ABOUT WHAT EXACTLY WAS TUNISIA'S POLICY. POLITICAL BUREAU COMMUNIQUE CLEARLY SEEKS TO EXPLAIN RESAOSNS FOY UNEXPECTED TURN IN EVENTS AND TO DISPEL ANY REASON FOR DOUBTING EITHER GOT RESOLVE OR GOT REASONABLENESS.

7. SUBSEQUENT TO DRAFTING ABOVE, I HAVE LEARNED OF TODAY'S VELIOTES-
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MONTGOMERY TELEPHONE CONVERSATION CONCERNING INTERPRETATION OF THE POLITICAL BURAEU'S COMMUNIQUE. FOLLOWING MAY HELP CLARIFY: BEGINNING WITH REFERENCE TO PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S OPENING RAMARKS TO POLITICAL BUREAU MEETING, COMMUNIQUE NOTES THAT "A DISCUSSION FOLLOWED ABOUT THE NEW SITUATION, WHICH INVOLVES:

"QAYDHAFI'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE IS WILLING TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF THROUGH NEGOTIATION AND ARBITRATION.

"HIS AFFIRMATION THAT THE ON-GOING OPERATIONS IN THE TWBPUTED ZONE DO NOT IMPLY, A PRIORI, THAT THIS ZONE FALLS UNDER THE SOV-EREIGNTY OF THE COUNTRY WHICH CARRIES OUT SUCH OPERATIONS.

"HIS CONCERN TO AVOID ANYTHING THAT COULD LEAD TO CONFRONTATION AND DISCORD BETWEEN THE TWO BROTHER COUNTRIES.

"HIS DESIRE TO CREATE A CLIMATE FAVORABLE TO DIALOGUE AND TO STRENGTHEN THE TIES OF FRATERNITY AND OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES."

ALL OF ABOVE WAS EVIDENTLY DRAWN FROM QADHAFI'S JUNE 2 SPEECH AND WAS PRESENTED AS JUSTIFICATION FOR GOT'S "FAVORABLE AND POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE LIBYAN INITIATIVE." IT WAS SPECIFICALLY GIVEN AS THE LIBYAN POSITION AND NOT REPEAT NOT AS THAT OF GOT.
MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2241329
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE
TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, ENRG, TS, LY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbs://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0b1a3a83-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009